

SAF/LLZ (Legislative Research Team)

SKELTON, Ike (Democrat)
Representative, 4th District, Missouri
Elected 1976 to 95th Congress
Reelected to succeeding Congresses



BACKGROUND

Born: Lexington, Lafayette County, MO - 20 December 1931
Home: Lexington, Missouri
Marital Status: Married (Susan) - 3 children
Religion: Christian Church
Education: Wentworth Mil Acad, AA, '51; U of Edinburgh (Scot) '53; U of MO, AB, '53; LLB, '56
Military: None
Profession: Attorney

Political: MO Senate, 1970-76. Succeeded retiring Rep Wm Randall (D) in the 1976 general election with 56% of the vote. Reelected with 67% of the vote in 2000 and 2002.

Rep Skelton, a moderate to conservative Democrat, contributed to the 1986 DoD Reorganization Act (Goldwater-Nichols) by restructuring the educational system for mid/senior level officers. In 1993 supported action codifying language stating homosexuality is incompatible with military service. Said smaller defense budgets call for a more mobile Army and Air Force, and for more emphasis on PME. Believed the May 95 bomber study was made to fit the budget, not requirements. In the 105th Congress, warned giving up the 2-MRC strategy would be a prescription for giving up on being a superpower. Pressed unsuccessfully for explanation why B-2 wasn't in war plans (Wash Post, 18Feb98). Concerned about what he perceives as a growing gap between civilian and military America, and the less socially diverse volunteer force, a condition that contributes to lack of public support for increased defense budgets. (CR, 5May98)

In the 106th Congress, expressed concern over language that prohibited use of FY00 funds for combat or peacekeeping operations in Yugoslavia. Praised the men and women of 509th Bomb Wg, Whiteman AFB, Mo, for their contributions to the success of the B-2 missions in Operation Allied Force. Requested GAO reports into backlog of security clearance investigations and quality of contractor employee investigations.

In the 107th Congress, became the leadership liaison for the Democratic Caucus Task Force on Defense and Military Personnel. In Feb 2001 called for better coordination in federal efforts to combat terrorism and introduced the Homeland Security Strategy Act. Voiced concern that President Bush's Feb 2001 budget provided too little money for defense. Called for the AF to procure additional B-2 bombers. In a Sept 2001 speech said that planned purchases of tactical aircraft might have to be reduced to provide funds for more airlift and bombers. Objected to the inclusion of language in the FY03 DoD auth that he said would jeopardize wilderness study areas beneath the air space of the Utah Test & Training Range (UTTR). Opposes the development and deployment of nuclear-tipped ballistic missile interceptors; supports maintaining flexibility to reduce operationally deployed nuclear weapons below 1700; supports stronger notification requirements prior to resumption of underground nuclear testing. While not opposing the military option in Iraq, said President Bush has yet to make the case that a threat requiring military action exists.

Additional: Member, Stealth Caucus; Air Power Caucus. Ft Leonard Wood in his district.
AF Bases: Whiteman AFB

COMMITTEES

ARMED SERVICES - Ranking Democrat; Subc on Tactical Air and Land Forces